DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 121 549 RC 009 152

AUTHOR Salvatierra, Richard D.
TITLE Statement by Richard D. Salvatierra, Assistant National Director, LULAC National Education Service Centers, Accompanied by Mr. Roger W. Gomez, Legislative Assistant, LULAC National Education Service Centers before the Committee on Education and Labor, Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education, October 9, 1975.
INSTITUTION League of United Latin American Citizens, Washington, D.C. National Education Service Centers.
PUB DATE 9 Oct 75
NOTE 12p.; For related documents, see RC 009 151 and 153

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS *Agency Role; *Educational Legislation; *Educational Opportunities; Federal Government; Federal Legislation; Graduate Study; *Higher Education; Organizations (Groups); Resource Allocations; School Personnel; *Spanish Culture
IDENTIFIERS Higher Education Act of 1965; *LULAC League of United Latin American Citizens; LULAC National Education Service Centers

ABSTRACT

In 1965 Congress passed the Higher Education Act which provided the Federal government a more significant role in determining the course of higher education. The LULAC's (League of United Latin American Citizens) National Education Service Centers (LNESC) firmly supports the extension of the Higher Education Act, as amended in 1972. LNESC particularly supports those aspects that have an impact upon Hispanic students and benefit the entire Hispanic community in gaining greater access to the opportunities provided by institutions of higher education. Therefore, LNESC strongly recommends that: (1) Title III be extended with a corresponding increase in authorization levels to expand the program and affect inflation; (2) the language in the new legislation insures that each minority group, including Hispanics, receives an adequate and fair share of the available monies to carry out their respective programs; (3) the authorization levels for Parts C and E of Title V which seeks to improve the present and long range needs of educational personnel be continued and expanded; (4) Title IX, Part B be extended and expanded beyond the present level of 7,500 fellowships; and (5) a U.S. Higher Education Council be established to assist Congress and the Office of Education in formulating plans and goals to effectively provide guidance and insight on the contemporary issues affecting higher education. (NQ)

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ED121549

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NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
400 First Street, N.S., Suite 716
Washington, D. C. 20001

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STATEMENT

BY

RICHARD D. SALVATIERRA
ASSISTANT NATIONAL DIRECTOR
LULAC NATIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS

ACCOMPANIED BY

MR. ROGER W. GOMEZ
LEGISLATIVE ASSISTANT
LULAC NATIONAL EDUCATION SERVICE CENTERS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR
SUBCOMMITTEE ON POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

OCTOBER 9, 1975

RC009152

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee, I am Richard D. Salvatierra, Assistant National Director of the National Education Service Centers (NESC), a non-profit, non-partisan educational organization sponsored by LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens. Accompanying me is Mr. Roger Gomez, Legislative Assistant for LNESC.

On behalf of LULAC, the Education Centers and Hispanic American Citizens, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the occasion to appear before you today to convey our concerns on H.R. 3470.

I would first like to present you with a short brief on our organization, its purpose and objectives. LNESC is engaged in the area of higher education with primary emphasis on Hispanics. We are headquartered in Washington, D.C. and our principle objectives are to:

1) Increase the number of persons attending America's colleges and universities with special emphasis on Hispanic American students.
2) Increase the retention rate of Hispanic American students in colleges and universities.
3) Increase the awareness of the educational problems faced by the Hispanic community to institutions of higher education, foundations, corporations, and federal agencies with interest to bring about an increased concentration of resources on the problem.

As of August, 1975 our eleven (11) field offices located in nine states had provided the following services:

14,000+ students have been accepted into colleges and universities

9,200 students have enrolled in post secondary schools of their choice

31,400 students have received some form of counseling/assistance

over $9,000,000 has been generated as financial aid

Thusfar, LNESC has had a significant national impact in upgrading the educational skills of a segment of our population which has traditionally been denied the equal opportunity of higher education.

As the nation's oldest and fastest growing minority group, the Spanish surnamed people are only too keenly aware that their dismal educational record will never be overcome unless larger numbers of Hispanic leaders, decision makers, businessmen, professionals and educators are produced by the institutions of higher education in this country. Clearly the need for a service to enhance the accessibility of post secondary educational opportunities for Spanish surnamed students is indicated by the historically low rates of participation in higher education.

The highest concentration of Hispanics are found in the Southwest, particularly in the states of California and Texas. Hispanics account for over 16% of the population in both states. Enrollment figures for the California State Universities and Colleges indicate that we account for 5.4% of the undergraduate and 3.0% of the graduate students, while for the University of California, the figures drop to 3.3% and 2.8% respectively. At

the sprawling campus of the University of Texas in Austin, Hispanics make up 4.1% of the student enrollment.

Hispanics account for well over 19% of Arizona's population, but yet they only account for 4.3% of the enrollment at the University of Arizona.

Over 40% of New Mexico's population is of Hispanic heritage yet they make up 14.7% of the student body at the University of New Mexico. The same dire situation exists not only in the Southwest, but throughout the entire country as well.

In this context Hispanic Americans see higher education as the means to fully participate in what American society has to offer. Expanded opportunities for Hispanics in higher education are desperately needed in order to assist in overcoming the problems of low socio-economic status, low political participation, and low educational achievement in our communities across the country. As the nation's second largest minority, Hispanics must be given adequate attention when issues addressing minorities and the disadvantaged are addressed. Such recognition will facilitate the Hipsanics' visibility in issues affecting them in all aspects of higher education including enrollment, financial aid, faculty and administrative levels at centers of higher education, and also by H.E.W., and in particular the Office of Education.

The U.S. Congress back in 1965 realized the importance of higher education's role in American society by passing the historical Higher Education Act of 1965 as amended in 1972, which provided the federal government a more significant role in determining the course of higher education. Ten years later

after its initial passage we find ourselves working again to extend the Higher Education Act. In s expanse of time, America has witnessed racial unrest and intense social and political upheaval. Yet institutions of higher education have remained intact having experienced great changes in allowing greater numbers of minorities, including Hispanics, to take advantage of the available opportunities provided by higher education. Unfortunately, Hispanics still number far less at institutions of higher education than their representation in the total population.

On a broad spectrum, because of our unique cultural and linguistic experiences, Hispanic students if they are to succeed, are in need of varied and continuing forms of support including financial aid, academic advisement and career counseling. Since the majority of Hispanic students come from low income families, allowances have to be made providing more financial aid in order to assist them to remain in the classroom during these economically troubled times and to continue on into graduate schools.

LNESC firmly supports the extension of the Higher Education Act particularly those aspects that have an impact upon Hispanic students and benefit the entire Hispanic community in gaining greater access to the opportunities provided by institutions of higher education.

Title III, Strengthening Developing Institutions: is designed to benefit those institutions of higher education that are struggling for survival and isolated from the main currents of academic life through the introduction of new curricula, faculty and administration improvement training programs, internships, research participation etc. These institutions would be able to better serve their students in the overall improvement of their programs. Institutions of higher education serving large concentrations of minority students were provided assistance under the Higher Education Act.

However, the number of grants and amounts awarded to minority programs under Title III indicate a large disparity between awards granted Blacks and Spanish-speaking programs. For example, in 1972, Black institutions were awarded 96 grants totaling $30,994,100. Grants for support of programs for the Spanish-speaking in the same year totaled eighteen (18) in the amounts of $2,016,000. This is a difference of over 1100% in grant funds for Blacks as oppossed to Spanish speaking programs. Taking one more step we discover that the average grant for the Black program was $322,055 while for the Spanish-speaking program it was$156,444. This also happens to be the case for most other years. We in no way wish to suggest that funding for Black Programs be reduced. However, we simply want to point out that the Hispanics are not receiving a fair share.

Title V: Education Professions Development: This Title is "designed to upgrade the quality of teaching and to help meet critical shortages of adequate trained educational personnel."

Particularly Part C and Part E are suited to meet the needs of the Hispanic community in providing greater numbers of adequately trained Hispanic teachers. Under Part C the training of teachers for children with limited English speaking ability should be maintained in raising the quality of teachers not only for this particular segment of students but also nationwide at the elementary and secondary levels. Part E, Training Programs for Higher Education Personnel calls for grants to institutions of higher education to help them train persons who want to prepare themselves to serve as teachers, administrators, or education specialists in institutions of higher education. In light of Hispanics extremely low participation in higher education at these levels, it is imperative that greater opportunities are provided for them if they are to gain the necessary preparation to enter these important decision making levels in higher education. Current data reveals a minute .6% of the faculty nationwide is of Hispanic heritage at institutions of higher learning. According to a study conducted by the College Entrance Examination Board in July, 1972, the ratio of Hispanic students to Hispanic faculty was nearly 100 to 1 in the Southwest. A ratio of approximately 20 to 1 is generally considered acceptable as a typical student/faculty ratio throughout higher education institutions.

Title IX, Graduate Programs, particularly Part B Graduate Fellowships for Careers in Postsecondary Education specifically authorizes the Office of Education "to award fellowships for study in graduate programs at institutions of higher education to persons interested in academic careers in educational programs beyond the high school level."

Part B, Title IX takes into consideration the need to train more teachers and academic leaders from minority groups. If Hispanics are to increase their numbers in the higher education professions they should be given adequate attention in attaining this goal.

According to the 1970 census, Hispanics constituted approximately 6% of the total population. At the same time, however, only 1.9% of America's college students were of Hispanic heritage. Hispanic graduate students accounted for only 1% of the total graduate school enrollment. Of the bachelor degrees earned in 1970, the Hispanic accounted for only 1.2% of the total. For those earning a doctorate in 1972-1973, it was a disparate .8%.

Again, these figures point to the necessity for assisting Hispanics to pursue graduate studies in all disciplines and with adequate financial help. Having Hispanics assisted through such programs in these positions is crucial to the entire Hispanic community if we are to open the door and build leadership in the nation's institutions of higher education particularly in the Southwest.

Recommendations:

- LNESC strongly recommends that Title III be extended with a corresponding increase in authorization levels to expand the program and affect inflation. LNESC would also like to see language included in the new legislation that would insure that each minority group including Hispanics receive an adequate and fair share of the available monies to carry out their respective programs that have been awarded to each group. In addition, we also favor language that seeks to also maintain adequate representation of each minority group in the division of OE that executes Title III.

- LNESC strongly supports the continuation and expanded authorization levels for Part C and E of Title V which seeks to improve the present and long range needs of educational personnel. Part C aims to train educators in the elementary and secondary school levels. We would like to see language incorporated that would assist institutions in areas of high Hispanic concentration to incorporate such programs in training new Hispanic teachers for these educational levels.

- On Part E, LNESC strongly endorses the concept for training programs for higher education personnel. We recommend that language be inserted that would serve to grant special assistance in program development at institutions of higher education for disadvantaged minority students including Hispanics who are aspiring to pursue a career in higher education not only as faculty but as administrators as well. Provisions should be included to insure that fellowships and traineeships are adequately sufficient for other students to continue and complete their studies.
- LNESC strongly urges that Title IX, Part B, Graduate Fellowships for Careers in Post-secondary Education be extended and expanded beyond the present level of 7,500 fellowships. The needs of minorities should be considered to include Hispanics to assure that they receive an adequate number of the available opportunities under Part B. The maximum amount of fellowships currently set at $4000/Per Academic year should be increased to account for the effects of inflation that have threatened to terminate students studies.
- Our final recommendation is that a United States Higher Education Council be established. This Council should consist of experts in all aspects of Higher Education including experts from minority groups with adequate Hispanic representation to assist the Congress and Office of Education in formulating plans and goals to effectively provide guidance and insight on the contemporary issues affecting higher education.

We feel our suggestions and recommendations will be beneficial not only to Hispanic American students, but to all students in this country.

Although the education centers are a relative new organization, we nevertheless are ready to assist you and hope to be able to provide additional information as you work on the Higher Education Act. Thank You.